

Office of Congressman Charles W. Dent  
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## Congressman Dent praises SAFE Port Act, which passes House overwhelmingly

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15), a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, hailed final passage of HR 4954, the SAFE Port Act of 2006, an important measure to prevent attacks on U.S. ports and transportation of dangerous materials into the country. Congressman Dent has supported this bill from its inception through numerous amendments, and now passage in both the Senate and House. The bill passed the House 409 to 2.

“As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I have been monitoring this bill since its inception,” said Congressman Dent. “Port facilities and the government must work together in order to make sure these facilities are safe from attack and prepared for any contingency.”

The bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to verify the effectiveness of each port facility’s security plans at least twice a year. It also appropriates \$400 million annually in financial assistance through FY2011 for ports based on risk and need.

A key provision helps to insure the integrity and safety of items moving through the international supply chain. It requires the Department of Homeland Security to screen 100 percent of all high-risk cargo and to scan for radiation 100 percent of the containers identified as high-risk originating from outside the United States.

“All containers identified as high-risk need to be scanned with appropriate radiological equipment,” Congressman Dent said. Further, the bill requires the Department to conduct a pilot project to determine the feasibility of certain radiation scanner and gamma ray detectors in the United States, while it also requires the deployment of nuclear and radiological detection systems at 22 U.S. seaports by September 30, 2007, and the development of plans to deploy monitors at additional ports.

The Act also authorizes \$213 million for the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). This is a voluntary program in which shippers, exporters, freight forwarders, and others cooperate with the Department in order to help secure the supply chain. During the course of the floor debate on this bill in May of 2006, the Congressman supported the inclusion of an amendment which would bring “contract logistics providers,” business entities that control the movement and warehousing of goods, within the scope of the C-TPAT program.

Finally, the bill also provides for the formal authorization of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO), which is responsible for the detection and identification of nuclear materials. Congressman Dent visited the DNDO facility in Nevada earlier this year and observed first-hand the testing of nuclear and radiological countermeasures. The SAFE Port Act requires the DNDO to conduct testing of next-generation nuclear and radiological detection equipment and to put forth a timeline for completing installation of such equipment at all U.S. seaports.

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